

JAN 20 2017

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOUSING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that housing first
2 programs are a collaborative effort between the department of
3 human services and the United States Department of Housing and
4 Urban Development that provides housing and support services for
5 chronically homeless individuals, including those who have an
6 addiction or mental illness, or both. The principles of housing
7 first programs include:

- 8 (1) Moving chronically homeless individuals into housing
9 directly from streets and the shelters without a
10 precondition of accepting or complying with treatment;
- 11 (2) Providing robust support services for program
12 participants that are predicated on assertive
13 engagement rather than coercion;
- 14 (3) Granting chronically homeless individuals priority as
15 program participants in housing first programs;



- 1 (4) Embracing a harm-reduction approach to addictions
- 2 rather than mandating abstinence while supporting
- 3 program participant commitments to recovery; and
- 4 (5) Providing program participants with leases and tenant
- 5 protections as provided by law.

6 Housing first is a nationally recognized best practice and
7 has been proven to be an effective approach to helping people
8 experiencing chronic homelessness get off of the streets in
9 several cities. In Portland, Oregon, the housing first program
10 helped reduce the number of chronically homeless people sleeping
11 outside by seventy per cent. In Los Angeles, California, for
12 each chronically homeless person placed in housing first, Los
13 Angeles saved \$80,000 over two years. Similar results in Salt
14 Lake City, Utah; Denver, Colorado; Quincy, Massachusetts; and
15 Portland, Maine; show that housing first is effective in
16 reducing chronic homelessness. Currently, the housing first
17 program only serves the island of Oahu, despite the needs of
18 individuals on neighboring islands.

19 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the
20 department of human services to support the State's housing
21 first programs in assisting the rest of Hawaii's residents



S.B. NO. 171

1 outside of Oahu who are chronically homeless and who are often
2 the most vulnerable and most difficult to serve.

3 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$3,000,000 or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
6 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
7 2018-2019 for continued implementation of the State's housing
8 first program and expansion of the program outside of Oahu to
9 assist residents who are chronically homeless.

10 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
11 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 171

Report Title:

Housing First; Department of Human Services; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the department of human services to continue to administer the housing first program, and to expand the housing first program outside of Oahu, for chronically homeless individuals.

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